

FEMA Voluntary Agency Liaison

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The mission of FEMA Voluntary Agency Liaisons (VALs) is to establish, foster, and maintain relationships among government, voluntary, faith-based, and community partners. Through these relationships, the VALs support the delivery of inclusive and equitable services and empower and strengthen capabilities of communities to address disaster-caused unmet needs.

Overview and Technical Assistance Services

VALs serve as an integral link between FEMA directorates and external partners. They identify gaps within service delivery and connect partners with resources in their efforts to supplement the emergency management capacity and capability of state, local, tribal and territorial governments.

The technical assistance provided by FEMA VALs includes:

- Providing streamlined, comprehensive and accessible information regarding federal programs, policies, public-private connections and situational awareness;
- Providing referrals to disaster survivors with unmet needs in coordination with Individual Assistance and voluntary organizations;
- Supporting navigation of the federal supply chain, programmatic, information-sharing and other processes;
- Elevating and addressing the needs of nongovernmental and voluntary organizations and their clients for better service delivery;
- Supporting the coordination of donated resources;
- Providing guidance to state, local, tribal and territorial governments on spontaneous unaffiliated volunteer management; and
- Coordinating engagement in whole-of-government response and recovery exercises and the development of federal, state, tribal and territorial planning documents.



While coordination with nongovernmental organizations occurs throughout the disaster cycle, one major component of VAL services is to provide guidance to Long-Term Recovery Groups (LTRGs). With the state/territorial VAL counterpart, FEMA VALs employ the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (National VOAD) Long-Term Recovery development model, which is the industry standard.

National VOAD is an association of nongovernmental organizations that mitigate the impact of disasters by delivering services to impacted communities and individuals. A LTRG is “a cooperative body that is made up of representatives from faith-based, nonprofit, government, business and other organizations working within a community to assist individuals and families as they recover from a disaster.”¹ Individual recovery is a cumulative effort by state and local VOADs, LTRGs, other coalitions and the communities they serve. VALs and LTRGs work with stakeholders to identify recovery resources which fill the unmet needs of a disaster impacted community.

Nongovernmental Voluntary Organization Support Services

Unmet needs that fall outside of the government’s purview may be fulfilled by nongovernmental voluntary organizations. These organizations provide assistance throughout the disaster cycle without legal mandate, contract or fee.

Common support services include:

- Mass Care services
 - Feeding and food security
 - Sheltering and wraparound services
- Financial assistance
- Donations management
- Volunteer management and mobilization
- Temporary and permanent housing
- Physical and mental health services
- Emotional and spiritual care
- Construction and rebuilding
- Case management
- Long-Term Recovery Group formation
- Mass communications
- Services for individuals with disabilities
- Services for people with access and functional needs, such as limited English proficiency, limited financial means, and lack of access to transportation, as well as support for children and older adults



- Preparedness planning and training

Resources

For more information on Voluntary Agency Coordination, how to volunteer and how to donate, visit the [Voluntary and Community Based Organizations](#)ⁱⁱ page or the [Volunteer and Donate](#)ⁱⁱⁱ page at FEMA.gov.

i National VOAD Recovery Committee (2012) *Long term recovery guide*. National VOAD. <https://www.nvoad.org/wp-content/uploads/longtermrecoveryguide-final2012.pdf>

ii <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/individuals-communities/voluntary-organizations>

iii <https://www.fema.gov/disasters/volunteer-donate>

